

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01496 120431Z

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 1496

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KN, KS

SUBJ: KOREA AT 32ND UNGA - MEETING OF CORE GROUP MAY 11

REF: USUN 1310

1. SUMMARY: ON MAY 11 AT BELGIAN MISSION, CORE GROUP HELD FIRST 1977 MEETING. ALL MEMBERS REPRESENTED EXCEPT NETHERLANDS. THERE WAS FULL AGREEMENT ON NEED FOR TIGHTEST SECURITY ON CORE GROUP ACTIVITIES IF KOREA QUESTION NOTTO BE INADVERTENTLY STIMULATED HERE. IN THIS CONNECTION, MEMBERS CONSIDERED IT PREMATURE TO CONSIDER EXPANSION OF CORE GROUP MEMBERSHIP. ROK PROVIDED ASSESSMENTS OF RECENT NORTH KOREAN POLICY VIS-A-VIS THE US, OF DOMESTIC NORTH
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 USUN N 01496 120431Z

KOREAN DEVELOPMENTS, OF KOREA AT NEW DELHI MEETING OF NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE (NACCFM), AS WELL AS SUMMARIES OF CONSIDERABLE NORTH KOREAN AND ROK ACTIVITIES THIS YEAR TO WIN SUPPORT AMONG NON-ALIGNED. ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM SEOUL, ROK CHAIRMAN AHN ASKED MEMBERS FOR THEIR ASSESSMENTS OF NORTH KOREA'S ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS AT NACCFM. HE INVITED THESE WHEN CORE GROUP MEETS NEXT ON AFTERNOON

OF MAY 18. AHN HOPED CORE GROUP COULD ALSO BEGIN CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 3 "ASSESSMENT OF NORTH KOREAN INTENTIONS" AT THAT TIME. HE SAID ROK WANTS AGAIN TO AVOID UNGA DEBATE, BUT IF DEBATE COMES, ROK WILL FIGHT HARD. ADDITIONALLY, AHN INVITED CORE GROUP'S VIEWS AS TO FUTURE STATUS OF UN COMMAND (UNC) IN LIGHT OF EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL OF US GROUND TROOPS. JAPAN EXPRESSED INTEREST IN HEARING DETAILS REGARDING MAY 3 INCIDENT JUST SOUTH OF DMZ WHICH RESULTED IN DEATH OF ONE UNC (ROK) SOLDIER AND WOUNDING OF ANOTHER. END SUMMARY.

2. NORTH KOREAN DOMESTIC SITUATION - ROK (PARK) GAVE ROK "CIA" ASSESSMENT THAT REPORTS LAST YEAR OF A POWER STRUGGLE WITHIN DPRK PROBABLY HAD BEEN OVERPLAYED. THERE WAS COMMENT TOO THAT RECENT RESCHEDULING OF SOME OF NORTH KOREA'S HARD CURRENCY, EXTERNAL DEBTS MIGHT HAVE REDUCED PYONGYANG'S FINANCIAL STRAITS, BUT VIEW WAS THAT FINANCIAL PROBLEMS THEMSELVES PROBABLY HAD BEEN INSUFFICIENTLY GRAVE TO LIMIT DPRK'S ABILITY TO CONDUCT DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY ABROAD.

3. REGARDING NORTH KOREA ATTITUDES TOWARD CARTER ADMINISTRATION, ROK TOOK NOTE OF TWO LETTERS REPORTEDLY TRANSMITTED FROM KIM IL-SONG TO PRESIDENT CARTER VIA PAKISTAN'S PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO AS WELL AS ONE FROM DPRK FOREIGN MINISTER HO TAM TO SECRETARY VANCE CALLING FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH US. ROK ALSO STRESSED THAT DPRK MEDIA DURING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1977 HAD MODERATED CAMPAIGN AGAINST US AND THAT DURING MARCH THERE HAD BEEN NO ATTACKS ON US AT ALL. ROK TOOK SPECIAL NOTE OF KIM IL-SONG'S APRIL 23 INTERVIEW WITH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USUN N 01496 120431Z

EXECUTIVE MANAGING EDITOR OF JAPAN'S "YOMIURI SHIMBUN" IN WHICH KIM EIL-SONG COMMENTED THAT NORTH KOREA WOULD "HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE HOW CARTER FULFILLS HIS PLEDGES" WHILE AT SAME TIME SUGGESTING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S SUBORDINATES WERE GOING BACK ON HIS CAMPAIGN PLEDGES.

4. ROK THEN OUTLINED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL EFFORTS DURING RECENT MONTHS OF ROK AND DPRK TO GAIN SUPPORT AMONG NON-ALIGNED AND OTHER COUNTRIES (SEPTTEL). ROK UNDERLINED ITS RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT, TECHNICAL, AND LEADERSHIP-EXCHANGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WITH OVER A DOZEN COUNTRIES IN AFRICA. BEFORE NACCFM, SEOUL'S AMBASSADORS IN 36 NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, INCLUDING 12 IN MODERATE NACC COUNTRIES, HAD MADE APPROACHES ASKING THAT ROK'S POSITION BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION AT NEW DELHI. CANADA ESPECIALLY APPLAUDED SEOUL'S DECISION TO SEND DELEGATION TO FORTHCOMING MAPUTO CONFERENCE AND THEREBY MANIFESTING ITS CONCERN REGARDING SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS.

5. ROK REVIEWED COURSE OF NACCFM AND SAID IT WAS RESERVING IN ITS ASSESSMENT OF NORTH KOREAN ATTITUDES AT NEW DELHI. ROK WAS DOING THIS BECAUSE NACCFM COMMUNIQUE IN FINAL VERSION DID INCLUDE REFERENCE TO A "PEACE AGREEMENT", WHICH IN LIGHT OF PREVIOUS NORTH KOREAN STANCE, COULD BE INTERPRETED TO MEAN A PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND NORTH KOREA WITH ROK EXCLUDED.

6. TO CONCLUDE MEETING, AHN REFERRED TO U.S. STATEMENTS REGARDING EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL OF ALL US GROUND TROOPS FROM KOREA. WHILE SAYING THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT WAS NOT IMMINENT, AHN INVITED CORE GROUP COMMENTS ON RELATIONSHIP OF GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWAL TO FUTURE OF UNC.

7. AS TO ROK GOALS IN CONNECTION WITH FORTHCOMING UNGA, AHN SAID ROK HOPES AGAIN TO AVOID DEBATE ON KOREAN QUESTION AS WAS CASE IN 1976, BUT SHOULD DEBATE COME, ROK IS READY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 USUN N 01496 120431Z

TO FIGHT HARD.

8. JAPAN EXPRESSED MUCH INTEREST IN LEARNING DETAILS REGARDING MAY 3 INCIDENT JUST SOUTH OF DMZ IN WHICH ONE UNC (ROK) SOLDIER WAS KILLED AND ANOTHER WOUNDED.

9. COMMENT: AT MAY 18 MEETING WE WOULD PROPOSE DRAWING ON, FOR INSTANCE, NEW DELHI'S 5415 AND 6071) TO COMMENT ON NACCFM. ON DMZ INCIDENT WE WOULD PROPOSE DRAWING ON CINCUNC 090811Z MAY 77. ON NORTH KOREAN LETTERS, WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT AMERICAN REPLIES REFLECTED OUR CONTINUED READINESS TO NEGOTIATE BUT ONLY ON BASIS THAT ROK INCLUDED AS FULL AND EQUAL PARTNER. REGARDING COMMENT ON GROUND-TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND THE UNC, WE WOULD PROPOSE EMPHASIS ALONG LINE THAT UN COMMAND IS AN ESSENTIAL PARTY TO KOREAN ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AND THAT UNC'S EXISTENCE WOULD BE REQUIRED UNTIL THERE WAS A SATISFACTORY ALTERNATIVE TO MAINTAIN THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT OR TO SUBSTITUTE FOR IT.
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